

Many people believe that installing STOP signs on all approaches to an intersection will result in fewer accidents. This is not always the case. Although the accident severity may be lessened, such installations cause additional driver delay for those on the main street and higher vehicle operating costs caused by stopping additional vehicles. There is no real evidence to indicate that STOP signs decrease the overall speed of traffic. Impatient drivers view the additional delay caused by unwarranted STOP signs as "lost time" to be made up by driving at higher speeds between STOP signs. Unwarranted STOP signs breed disrespect by motorists who tend to ignore them or slow down without stopping. This can sometimes lead to tragic consequences

Federal and State regulations require the installation of all traffic control devices, including STOP signs, to follow the guidelines in the [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) (MUTCD). The MUTCD is published by the U.S. Department of Transportation and is the national standard for Traffic Control Devices.

A multiway stop condition **may** be installed if it meets at least one of the warrants as defined in the MUTCD. Below are brief descriptions of these multiway STOP warrants:

1. Where traffic signals are warranted and urgently needed, the multiway STOP is an interim measure that can be installed quickly to control traffic while arrangements are being made for the signal installation.
2. An accident problem, as indicated by five or more reported accidents of a type susceptible to correction by a multiway STOP installation in a 12-month period. Such accidents include right and left-turn collisions as well as right-angle collisions.
3. Minimum Traffic volumes: (a) The total vehicular volume entering the intersection from all approaches must average at least 500 vehicles per hour for any 8 hours of an average day, and (b) The combined vehicular and pedestrian volume from the minor street of highway must average at least 200 units per hour for the same 8 hours, with an average delay to minor street vehicular traffic of at

least 30 seconds per vehicle during the maximum hour, but (c)
When the 85-percentile approach speed of the major street traffic exceeds 40 miles per hour, the minimum vehicular volume warrant is 70 percent of the above requirements. STOP signs should not be viewed as a cure-all for solving all safety problems; but, when properly located, can be a useful traffic control device to enhance safety for all roadway users.